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ABSTRACT

This paper asks where and how women and women's styles of leadership are situated in Easton's Model of Policy Process. The Easton Model provides a means of understanding policy development from a micropolitical perspective and offers analysis of environmental influences on policy decision making and implementation, allowing the model to accommodate the fact that decision making, policy development, and implementation are influenced by the needs, demands, and quirks of outside influences. Drawing on the literature on women's leadership styles, the paper focuses on women as educational leaders, evaluating whether their leadership styles would have greater chances of success within Easton's systemic model of policy processes. It provides an overview of the Easton Model, offers an example using the model, analyzes successful leaders using the model, discusses women's leadership styles, gives examples and amplifications of women's leadership practices, and discusses the representation of women in the Easton Model. The article concludes that although the model is superior to earlier models, it is still based on traditional concepts of leadership and organizations and thus ignores or diminishes the experiences and values of women who fall outside hegemonic norms, perpetuating the absence of studies on women's leadership practices and philosophies. (Contains 35 references.) (RJM)

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Running head: WOMEN EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

The Body Micropolitic: Where Do Women Educational Leaders Fit in the Easton Model of Policy Analysis?

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Paper presented at the 1999 annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (AERA), Montreal, Canada.

Joyce S. Raveling is a doctoral student in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Washington. This paper is still under development so comments and suggestions are welcome.

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Introduction

Micropolitics are "the use of formal and informal power by individuals and groups to achieve their goals in organizations" (Blase, 1991, p. 11) and the Easton Model of Policy Process provides a means of understanding policy development from a micropolitical perspective. This model includes environmental influences on policy decision making and implementation so it accommodates the reality that decision making, policy development, and implementation are not exclusively the sum of rational acts, rather they are impacted by the needs, demands, and quirks of outside influences. The Easton Model provides plausible explanations of how these processes are often, complex, convoluted, and even irrational.

The Easton Model also provides a springboard for understanding political leadership, a leadership style that takes into account micropolitical processes and which also appraises leaders on their abilities to work with and within multiple political factions (Blase, 1991; Scribner, Reyes, & Fussarelli, 1995). The model provides some explanations as to why some individuals are unsuccessful as leaders, or why they may be successful in one circumstance, but unsuccessful in another arena.

Although there are many individual exceptions, as a group, women have tended to report particular struggles and failures as leaders. Focusing specifically on women in positions of educational leadership, numerous articles, lectures, and books describe the particular challenges women face as superintendents, principals, deans, and college presidents. Since Carol Gilligan's seminal work in the early 1980s, the attention given to women's leadership styles has largely centered on the ways women's styles differ from men's styles. While it is problematic to categorize all women as employing one particular type of leadership style, there are common themes that often arise when analyzing the literature on

women's leadership styles. Based on the literature on women's leadership styles, this paper asks where and how women and women's styles of leadership are situated in Easton's Model.

Limitations of this Paper

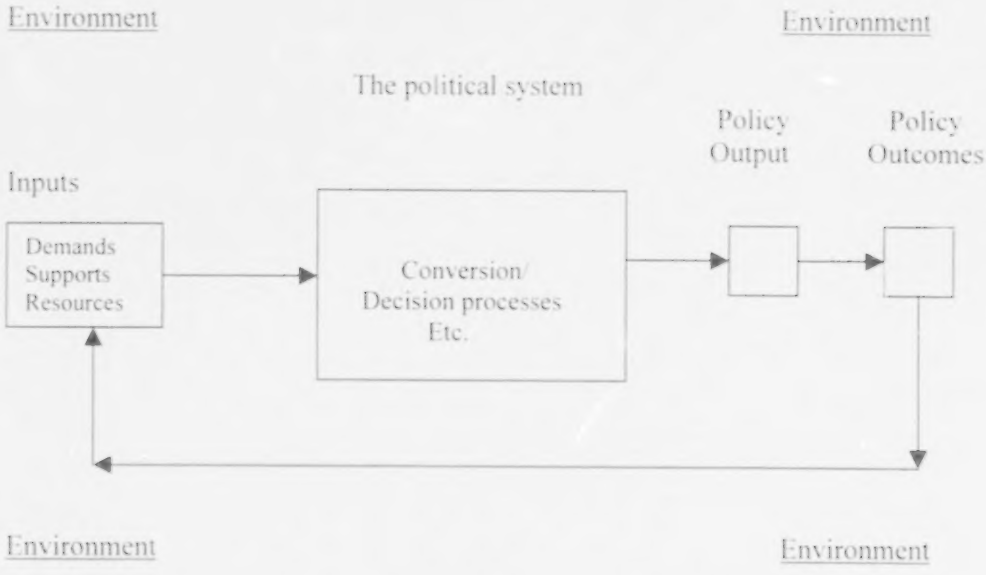
There are three major limitations to this paper. First, while an increasing amount of literature exists about women leaders in post-secondary education, most of it focuses on applications in very specific settings. Although there are consistencies between women leaders at research universities and community colleges, as well as consistencies with women faculty whose leadership roles go unrecognized, it remains difficult to focus solely on leadership styles in this literature. Consequently, the primary focus of this paper is women leaders in K-12 settings.

Secondly, the paper will focus on women as educational leaders and will not address the intersections of race and class as well as gender. I made this decision based on the paucity of information available; while there is scant information available on educational leaders of color, there is even less research specifically viewing leaders through the lenses of socioeconomic or class backgrounds. The absence of information on these subjects in this paper does not indicate these leaders are unimportant, instead it recognizes the lack of information in these areas and the need for research to occur.

Finally, poststructuralists, postmodernists, and some contemporary feminists challenge notions of "women's ways" of leading as a social construction hindering and marginalizing women by reifying what is thought to be feminine. Regan and Brooks write that feminine attributes of leadership are consistent with culturally prescribed social roles for women and, sadly, perpetuate stereotypical and constraining beliefs about women generally and women leaders specifically (1995). Additionally, "women's ways" theories fail to account for men

who are relational leaders. The purpose of this paper is not to argue whether women's leadership styles are inherent or socially constructed, rather it is to evaluate whether, based on existing literature, would have greater chances of success within Easton's systemic model of policy processes.

The Easton Model of Policy Processes



Environment: includes social, economic, and political influences on outputs, systems, variables, policy outputs, and policy outcomes (Jenkins, 1993, p. 37).

Easton's model is a conceptual hypothesis offering a systemic means to analyze how policy is created, legislated, and implemented. Unlike earlier models of policy processes, it acknowledges that this process is influenced by many different players, including individuals and groups with differing concerns and issues who are also often in conflict with each other. It also notes there can be many disparities between the intention of a policy and its implementation. Additionally, there can be unforeseen or unintended consequences of a

particular policy or the implementation of that policy. A brief examination of Washington state's Proposition 601 provides an interesting example for understanding Easton's model.

An Example Using the Easton Model

Washington state does not have a state income tax but does have high sales and property taxes. Approximately six years ago, Washington voters approved Prop. 601, which limited increases in, state spending. The population of Washington was rapidly growing and there were many kinds of newcomers to the state. Highly educated professionals moved to the state in response to available jobs in technical, aeronautical, medical, and other businesses. The numbers of people continuing to relocate in Washington, particularly in the Puget Sound area, continued to increase. At the same time, many immigrants also flocked to the area. Naturally, a sizeable growth in the population meant an increasing birthrate as well. All mean inevitable demands on the resources of the state whether in building and maintaining roads, providing education, running the prison system, or offering other forms of social services. While the technological, aeronautical, medical, and other business kept the economy robust, the continued downward spirals of lumber and fishing industries meant an increased demand on state resources. As state spending skyrocketed, property taxes also rose at virtually astronomical rates. In simplistic terms, many of these voters aligned with recently elected, conservatives in the state legislature to craft and pass Prop. 601 which limits all future increases in state spending.

The policy output was the proposition itself. Unlike many policies, there is little room for local interpretations of the policy to vary.

The expected outcome of limiting state spending has been achieved and the state has even built a small budget surplus. Unexpected outcomes include inadequate funding

to the state's educational system. Education is included in the same funding resource as all social services and the prison system. The rate of prison industry growth has been huge and there are simply fewer funds available for education as more has been expended on prisons. As a result, class sizes are growing while teacher's salaries have stagnated. An increased population also created a demand for housing, housing costs have sharply escalated, and many teachers are unable to buy homes and, in some cases, to afford apartments. Presently, a fair number of teachers are being courted to work in other states needing more teachers; additionally, many school districts are staging one-day walk-outs across the state to draw attention to the immediate need for adequate salary increases.

It is doubtful that voters wanted to harm the state educational system when voting for Proposition 601, but it is an outcome of the it. At the present time, teachers seem to be gaining additional public support and there are efforts to modify Prop. 601. In the legislature, one faction argues for using the budget surplus to address needs such as teachers' salaries, another advocates refunds or reductions of property taxes, and yet another advocates building a larger surplus.

Successful Leaders in the Easton Model

Successful leaders, in the Easton Model, must be able to identify and understand the various factions—individuals and groups—involved in policy processes. They also must be able to influence and work with these factions who may hold deeply conflicting viewpoints. Based on the literature, would women educational leaders be more likely to be successful or unsuccessful leaders when viewed through the Easton model?

Women's Leadership Styles

Much has been written about leadership, including who is a leader, the qualities or characteristics of leaders, leadership styles or strategies, and so on. Literature on women leaders came initially from business and management fields and relied heavily on the popular leadership theories of the time, for example, transformational leaders (Burns, 1978; Tichy, 1986), "theory z" leaders (Ouchi, 1982), one-minute managers (Blanchard, 1982), and so on.

One outgrowth of Gilligan's seminal work on women's moral reasoning (1982) was a proliferation of theories about women as relational leaders. Often under the rubric of "women's ways," this paradigm proposes that women's leadership is infused with care and concern for others, and places value on process, not just outcomes.

Studies of women leaders in educational settings have focused primarily on women administrators in the K-12 system, the level at which women have broken into significant leadership positions as superintendents and principals. Although over half of all college students are women, the few women leaders are clustered in lower levels of leadership (Moore, 1990). Less than 17% of all college presidents are women, and only 7% of the presidents of research universities are women (Chlinwiak, 1997; Chronicle Almanac, 1998; Touchton, Shavlik, & Davis, 1993). The only literature on women college presidents is demographic, to date, nothing exists on their leadership practices.

A literature review on the leadership attributes of women principals and superintendents characterized the following as typical of their leadership practices: an ethic of care, the importance of relationships and connections, value placed on inclusion and connection, efforts to empower others to work toward common goals, preference for non-hierarchical organizations, integration of professional and personal aspects of life,

collaborative and participatory styles of leadership, and the importance of hearing many voices (Belenky, 1986; Chliwniak, 1997; Colflesh, 1998; Moore, 1990).

Examples and Amplifications of Women's Leadership Practices

Believing that women are more likely to be relational leaders, Regan and Brooks developed a model of women leaders that distilled this lengthy list of commonly found characteristics of women leaders into five attributes:

♦Collaboration: "the ability to work in a group, eliciting and offering support to each member, creating a synergistic environment for everyone" (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 26). Collaborative leaders reach out, not down, to others. Hill and Raglund write that "in enlightened schools, administrators no longer consider how to *handle* teachers but instead find ways to *empower*. Decision making within (these) educational settings is not *directive* but rather *collaborative*" (1995, p. 45).

Built on the experiences of women K-12 administrators as well as feminist principles founded in equity, Rusch and Marshall (1995) developed a list of new assumptions for leaders. They emphasized that leaders encourage equal voice so communication becomes a circle rather than hierarchical line. Rather than top-down decision making, the concerns of those often viewed as "lower down" in the system must be involved. This avoids the notion that the leader knows best, even when she or he may have no idea how a policy will affect front-line workers who must implement it.

Additionally, Rusch and Marshall would assert that collaborative leaders need to openly dialogue about values. In educational settings, this includes overt discussions about the conflicts between financial constraints and the needs of students. Both shared values and moral commitments become the guiding principles of decision-making. This further means

that common sense and knowledge grounded in experience are valued so decisions and policy make sense. However, this common sense is based on shared common senses and as such, may very well reflect diversity.

A collaborative leadership style moves leadership and decision-making out of a dichotomous win-lose mentality which risks leaders striving to win for the sake of winning. Information must be shared so instead of guarding and withholding information as part of one's turf, leaders share information as part of the process of leading and making decisions. Better decisions come of this and there is more trust since people don't have to worry about hidden agendas (Rusch & Marshall, 1995). As one woman superintendent said, "I always believe that we win when we quit worrying about who gets credit" (Brunner, 1994).

In a collaborative system, policy is developed and changed through democratic means. The opinions and voices of others are valued and encouraged, and all interested parties should participate. This is not the axiom of the majority ruling, but rather a process of shared decision-making based on consensus. Since everyone is welcome to be a participant, consensus on the best alternatives can be reached even though not everyone can have his or her particular way. The leader's role is to facilitate agreement between opposing viewpoints which develops a consensus problem-solving model (Langford, 1995).

♦ Caring: "development of an affinity for the world and the people in it, translating moral commitment to action on the behalf of others" (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 27). Rusch and Marshall (1995) would add that leaders redefine loyalty and commitment as based in respect for diversity. This may be more difficult, but it relies on an investment in the needs of students, or another group, or on a shared common issue, rather than basing decisions on personality loyalty driven by hidden agendas. Because leaders care, they are willing to

challenge decisions to do things because "they've always been done that way." This may include putting the needs and concerns of a group, particularly a marginalized group, before individual needs.

Caring leaders also value "'vicarious achievement'—success resulting from the contribution of the subject to the achievement of some other person (Blackmore, 1989, p. 105). In other words, women leaders take pleasure in the achievements of others and may measure their own success in their abilities to empower others and nurture their development (Belenky, 1986).

♦ Courage: "capacity to move ahead in the unknown, testing new ideas in the world of practice" (Regan & Brooks, 1995, pp. 29-30). These leaders are risk-takers, but since participating and collaboration are stressed, the leader does not seek to draw attention to herself, but rather to everyone. Thus it is not a competitive style although there may be decision making about and allocation of limited resources.

Another element of risk taking is that leaders do not maintain the status quo. They engage in moral dilemmas, and challenge decisions made "because they've always been done that way.". These leaders redefine loyalty and commitment based on respect for diversity. This may be more difficult, but it relies on an investment in the needs of students, or on a common, shared issue, or on a group, rather than acting on personal loyalty based on hidden agendas. It may also include putting the needs and concerns of a group, particularly a marginalized group, before individual needs (Rusch & Marshall, 1995).

♦ Intuition: "ability to give equal weight to experience and abstraction to the mind and heart" (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 33). Intuition is not a magical characteristic, rather it's a mental ability developed and refined with experience.

♦ Vision: "ability to formulate and express original ideas, enabling others to consider options in new and different ways" (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 36). Vision is less a commitment to one particular outcome, and more about a type of process that allows synthesis of differing voices and ideas that can develop or evolve into new positions. It is a facet of collaboration.

Women Leaders in the Easton Model of Policy Processes

Easton's environmental factors, including recalcitrant cultural beliefs about gender, influence the impact of women leaders. The model offers some explanations why women particularly experience struggles as leaders. For example, Hill and Raglund (1995) interviewed 35 female educational leaders who reported that continuing beliefs in stereotypic myths, i.e., women leaders gold-dig, scheme, or sleep their way to the top, continue to haunt women in leadership roles. Langford's study of women school executives revealed 59 percent reported believing that women are less powerful on the job than male leaders. 86 percent agreed that women leaders are often perceived in stereotypical ways, and while they strongly disagreed that women cannot make decisions, delegate authority, or handle financial decisions, those stereotypes are persistent (Langford, 1995). Additionally, a leadership style based on collaboration may be mistakenly viewed as an inability to lead (Brunner, 1994; Langford, 1995).

In Easton's Model, this lack of credence for women leaders, or lack of belief in the value of their opinions and leadership styles is, generally, an existing, on-going cultural struggle and, as such, is an environmental factor impeding full participation.

The input side of the model additionally includes social influences on policy development. From this, we might infer that differing social experiences, differing interpretations of reality, differing points of view grounded in gendered experience would be

placed here. However, a weakness of the Easton Model is that while it accounts for differing expectations and conflicting opinions when formulating and enacting policy, there seems to be an assumption of commonality of life experiences and values. The model allows for a complex process, often fraught with conflict, however it fails to question existing power relations or socially constructed assumptions about leadership. Perceptions of women as leaders are important, and while the perception that women's input is less valuable may be an cultural, environmental reality in Easton's Model, this inequity is not challenged.

Increasing numbers of women becoming educational leaders do not ameliorate this problem since increased numbers will not necessarily translate into actual equal representation or recognized equity as leaders (Blackmore, 1989). Indeed, in post-secondary education, the recent increase in the numbers of women assuming college presidencies led to a concern of discrimination against potential male presidents (Fisher & Koch, 1996) even though 83 percent of college presidents are male (Chronicle Almanac, 1998).

The Easton Model also does not account for why women experience additional difficulties as leaders. The implicit assumptions in the model acknowledge that "gender and politics are entertwined, as they are in different, usually unobserved ways in men's lives" (Tallerico, 1993, p. 27). In other words, the model is based on male experiences and we must search to find places to add on women's experiences. That women experience difficulties is largely explained by their absence in the model. This is consistent with the notion that the way to teach women leadership strategies is to remediate them rather than to incorporate "many of the so-called female stereotypes" (Gupton & Slick, 1996, p. x). If women's experiences were included as part of the model, I suggest that it would not be conceptualized in a way suggesting such high levels of linearity.

I further suspect the model would not only include representations that allow for the diversity of people, it would be evident that people are involved in this entire process. People are the process, not detached boxes and words.

Finally, while there's passing acknowledgement that conflict might be useful at times, the greater implication in the Easton Model is that conflict is either undesirable or something to be manipulated and controlled. Conflict complicates, slows, and muddies the process. From the women's leadership perspective, conflict can be healthy precisely because it complicates, slows, and muddies the process. This means people are involved. People and the process of including them are more important than tidy boxes and lines on a page.

Implications

Jerome Bruner wrote there are "two modes of thought, each providing distinctive ways of ordering experience, of constructing reality…Efforts to reduce one mode to another or ignore one at the expense of the other invariably fail to capture the rich diversity of thought" (1986, pp. 11-12). While there may very well be more than two modes of cognitive functioning, there are obvious implications for the loss of perspective, and loss of "rich diversity of thought" when women are left out.

Blackmore writes that what "is not disputable is that organizational and leadership theory neglects the significance of gender" (1989, p. 104). There is a need to develop new theory that includes gendered perspectives as well as the perspectives of other marginalized groups. It is important to remember that feminist leadership styles, whether labeled "feminist" or not, do not argue against traditional male based types of leadership. Rather, they seek to reveal knowledge and methods that have not been widely understood. The goal is to increase the repertoire of leadership styles for all leaders (Regan & Brooks, 1995).

There are also important implications for training programs for educational administrators. "The problem is not learning about school leadership through the perspectives of men's experiences, the problem is being told that that's all there is" (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 18). The absence of women's perspectives gives women students the message that their experiences are unimportant and that they should fundamentally alter themselves to fit the models. This leads to marginalization and self-blame rather than recognizing structural constraints placed on women. It is vital to recognize the difficulties are structural, not individualized or personal. Langford (1995) wrote about women educational administrators who reported knowing they'd faced and experienced gender bias and discrimination. Yet these same women later viewed those experiences as based on individual and personal differences rather than the consequences of systematic bias. These "differences" all too easily become "deficiencies."

In addition to needing to learn the skills and competencies needed for educational administration, women also need to learn how to cope with perceptions about leaders based on gender. Rusch and Marshall echo these sentiments, writing that evaluation of research and educational programs indicates that

> Gender issues are marginal in the professoriate, in the curriculum, in classrooms, in educational administration texts, in theories of administration, and in professional literature. Administrator education offers few opportunities to confront gender issues, practice complex gendered relations, or examine women's ways of leading (1995, p. 22-24).

Hall adds,

> When women leaders interact, the impact of their messages as leaders may be

> distorted by perceptions of them as women… When women lead organizations, they are responded to bot in their formal position and as women. As a result their management behaviour has to take account of the constraints imposed by often conflicting expectations of women in power (1996, p. 90)

The very need for women's perspectives, women's leadership styles is revealed by one of the key issues Greenfield identified after conducting ethnographic work in an elementary school. "Fostering leadership in a school requires a heavy reliance upon interpersonal interactions with teachers and attention to teachers' socioemotional and moral, as well as task, concerns" (1991, p. 178). These are some of the very aspects so strongly valued in women's leadership philosophies.

Conclusion

Easton's Model of Policy Analysis was an improvement over earlier models and is a useful reminder that leadership, decision-making, and both policy development and implementation are not the tidy, rational processes depicted in earlier models. Given that micropolitics is a recently developed and growing area of study, the model is a useful tool that has furthered understanding of complex processes.

It is not surprising that the model has flaws, the primary flaw being that it is based on traditional models of leadership and organizations which overlook, ignore, or diminish the experiences and values of women as well as others who fall outside hegemonic norms. A literature review on women's leadership practices and philosophies underscores their absence. Reformulating this model, or creating a new one based on both women's and men's' experiences—as well as including the intersections of race and class—is not an easy task.

However, it is a worthwhile task as we endeavor to be the leaders who educate each other and our children—all our children.

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